

Promoting Fluency and Critical Thinking through Role Plays

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Activity Steps

Demo/Do Roleplay

Demonstrate a short role play that includes a problem situation. In our Saturday session, it was a role play of a student cheating on an exam (with a cheat sheet as well as off of another student). The student who cheated dropped the cheat sheet and the other student was accused of being the cheater. More examples of situations are found on the last page.

Audience Summary:

Elicit a summary of the role play from the audience/students.

Audience/Student brainstorm:

Ask the audience/students if they were in this situation (as the teacher, the cheating student, the 'honest' student), would they say anything differently. If there seems to be general consensus that they would react differently in the situation, have them get into groups and discuss what it is they would say differently.

Audience/Student Participation:

After the brainstorming, get a volunteer from the audience to come up, replace one of the actors, and act out what it is they would say (not explain it, but say it!). The other actors give as close to the same performance as before, but adjusting where/when necessary. Do this two-three times to see different variations.

For Teacher Seminar Series:

Link the *controlled* but problem solving role play to various steps in critical thinking and explain how it helps students practice fluency with meaningful but creative dialogue.

CRITICAL THINKING STAGES

SKILL	KEY WORDS	EXAMPLE FROM ROLE PLAY
EVALUATION	appraises, compares, concludes, contrasts, criticizes, critiques, defends, describes, discriminates, evaluates, explains, interprets, justifies, relates, summarizes, supports.	
SYNTHESIS	categorizes, combines, compiles, composes, creates, devises, designs, explains, generates, modifies, organizes, plans, rearranges, reconstructs, relates, reorganizes, revises, rewrites, summarizes, tells, writes.	
ANALYSIS	analyzes, breaks down, compares, contrasts, diagrams, deconstructs, differentiates, discriminates, distinguishes, identifies, illustrates, infers, outlines, relates, selects, separates	
APPLICATION	applies, changes, computes, constructs, demonstrates, discovers, manipulates, modifies, operates, predicts, prepares, produces, relates, shows, solves, uses.	
COMPREHENSION	comprehends, converts, defends, distinguishes, estimates, explains, extends, generalizes, gives Examples , infers, interprets, paraphrases, predicts, rewrites, summarizes, translates.	
KNOWLEDGE	defines, describes, identifies, knows, labels, lists, matches, names, outlines, recalls, recognizes, reproduces, selects, states.	

Source: <http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html>

ACCURACY

(focus on precision)



FLUENCY

(focus on message)

Discrete exercises

Drills

Repetition

Memorization

Knowledge

Controlled exercises

Flexible replies

Spontaneous response

Creative dialogue

Comprehension +

Teachers assess the students' performances at the end of each fluency practice so that the students are aware of their weaknesses and become more and more conscious of their errors. In this way, accuracy and fluency are practiced almost simultaneously. Accuracy and fluency are not mutually exclusive, but are interdependent.

<http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols/vol37/no3/p27.htm>



Possible “What-would-you-say” Role Plays

1. Cheating on an exam.

A classmate wants an answer on an exam, you don't want to help, but the teacher accuses you both of cheating.

2. Students' reasons *for not having done homework etc. for wanting Turkish in the classroom*

3. Teachers' explanations *for not changing things to make teaching easier/more effective; for using Turkish in the classroom; for not attending workshops, conferences etc.*

4. Other

-A student copies another's homework –all the mistakes are the same. The teacher notices this while correcting the homework.

- An admin person notices that a VIP's child has a very low grade for a class and feels the need to discuss this with the teacher who gave the grade.